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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: TOP STORIES, TERRORISM/MILITARY,
POLITICAL ISSUES, ECON/BUSINESS, MISCELLANEOUS - NOVEMBER 04, 2009

Summary: Local political stories dominated headlines in all newspapers on Wednesday. Reports and photographs of a train collision (17 dead, 42 injured) in Karachi were highlighted. Secretary Clinton's statement in Morocco announcing new initiatives to help businesses and non-governmental groups around the Muslim world received extensive coverage. Several major newspapers also highlighted her remarks, in an interview with Fox News, conceding that the "United States was also responsible for allowing Al Qaeda to enter Pakistan." In addition, some newspapers printed Ambassador Holbrooke's remarks from a Geo TV interview that "those who oppose the Kerry-Lugar Law (KLL) are the ones who either oppose the present Pakistani government or support the Taliban." Most major newspapers ran editorials on the current government-opposition row over the fate of the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO). The English language daily, "Daily Times," inferred in its editorial that "Pakistan will be further destabilized from now on. The PML-N (Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz) will muster the forces intent on overthrowing the government and will move to ask the government to take a confidence vote." "The Nation" editorialized India's alleged support for insurgents in South Waziristan and called upon allied forces in Afghanistan to urge India to "stop its nefarious activities" in the region. End Summary.

TOP STORIES

News Story: Train Crash In Karachi Leaves 18 Dead "Dawn" (11/04)

"Eighteen people, including women and children, died on Tuesday after a passenger train collided head on with a goods train in the suburbs of the city (Karachi). About 45 people were injured and at least two coaches of the passenger train were destroyed, officials and witnesses said." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: Clinton Offers Aid To Boost Ties With Muslim World
"Daily Times" (11/04)

"U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton offered aid on Tuesday to boost ties with the Muslim world and urged Israel, the Palestinians and Arab countries to move beyond recrimination in the search for peace. 'We are determined and persistent in the pursuit of that goal,' she said in a speech at a development forum in Morocco attended by Arab Ministers." (Story also covered in 'Dawn,' 'The News,' 'The Nation')

News Story: U.S. Allowed Al Qaeda To Enter FATA: Hillary "Dawn"
(11/04)

"U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has conceded that the United States was also responsible for allowing Al Qaeda to enter Pakistan. Clearly, Al Qaeda left Afghanistan. And we let them out, she told Greta Van Susteren of 'FOX News.'" (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: Kerry-Lugar Law Critics Are Taliban Backers: Holbrooke "Daily Times" (11/04)

"U.S. special envoy Richard Holbrooke has said those criticizing the Kerry-Lugar law are either opposed to the current Pakistani government or are supporting the Taliban, reported a private TV channel on Tuesday.... Holbrooke said although the NRO did not come under much discussion during Hillary Clinton's recent visit to Pakistan, U.S. officials were fully aware of the situation." (Story also covered by 'The News,' 'Jang')

News Story: Sararogha Secured; 21 Militants Killed "Dawn" (11/04)

"Security forces achieved a major success in their operation in South Waziristan on Tuesday by taking control of Sararogha, the operational nerve centre of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Military spokesman Maj-Gen Athar Abbas told Dawn that troops had entered Sararogha and were carrying out a search and clearance operation." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: We Are Prepared For A Long War: TTP Spokesman "Daily Times" (11/04)

"A Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) spokesman denied that the army has won a series of battlefield victories in South Waziristan, saying the group was drawing troops into a trap. 'We are prepared for a long war,' Azam Tariq told an Associated Press reporter by telephone."

News Story: Aid Workers Worried For Civilians in War Zone "Dawn" (11/04)

"Humanitarian workers said rising numbers of civilians are pouring out of Pakistan's war zone to flee battles between soldiers and Taliban militants but the fate of those left behind is uncertain, humanitarian workers say. 'How much civilians are affected, we don't know, and for that we need access,' said Billi Bierling, spokeswoman for the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Pakistan."

Editorial: India's Evil Designs, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/04)

"As all indications, some concrete and some circumstantial, that India is fishing in troubled waters has been available for quite some time, the only surprise is that Islamabad has not taken up the matter, with the firmness that it merits, with New Delhi, Washington and other capitals, which routinely blame it for their woes in Afghanistan. They have been pointing to the 'support' that Al-Qaida sanctuaries in the tribal belt allegedly give to the Afghan resistance as one of the main causes of their failure to defeat it. Therefore, it is only appropriate that not only these countries but also other friendly powers, which are equally eager that Pakistan put an effective end to the terrorist phenomenon, should have been suitably briefed and told that India must stop its nefarious activities if positive results are required."

Editorial: Indian 'Evidence' In South Waziristan, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (11/04)

"India is not going to say 'sorry we did it.' It is going to label the 'findings' as 'staged' by Pakistan to shift the blame for cross-border terrorism on to New Delhi. A similar case of Indian interference in Balochistan has been denied by India, but the international community, keen to see Pakistan succeed in clearing its Tribal Areas of terrorism, is gradually becoming aware of what the Indian policy in Afghanistan is doing to their efforts. Talking to India through a protest note will not do. The NATO-U.S. states,

now deployed in Afghanistan, have to be brought in on the implications of what India is doing. New Delhi is following a strategy that is going to hurt India in the long run. This must be made clear to the global alliance against terrorism."

Editorial: Proof At Last, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (11/04)

"Now after having proof of Indian role in South Waziristan, it is important that this issue should be discussed with India. If our government is serious and wants to control the volatile situation in the country in general and Waziristan in particular, it should launch a vigorous foreign policy offensive on this issue in order to expose Indian involvement at the international level. For this purpose the world press should be invited in Pakistan to show them about the role India has been playing in Pakistan. It is time our Foreign Office realized the importance of taking up this issue with the Indian authorities firmly."

Editorial: Show India's Ugly Face To The World, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (11/03)

"During the on-going Operation Rah-i-Nijat in South Waziristan, security forces have recovered literature and weapons proving Indian involvement in Waziristan. In a press briefing, army spokesman Major General Athar Abbas has said that this evidence has been sent to the Foreign Ministry... Had our rulers presented evidence of Indian involvement in terror acts in Pakistan to the world and unveiled its heinous designs against our country, Hillary Clinton would not have conveniently defended India upon returning to her country and said that 'we have no evidence of Indian involvement in Balochistan'.... In view of the latest evidence found by the security forces, India's real face should be revealed to the United Nations."

Editorial: The Foreign Hand, an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (11/04)

"It is a disturbing matter for Pakistan that its territory should have become a point of convergence for militants. The presence of so many foreign militants also allows the U.S. to regularly allege that the top Al Qaeda leadership is indeed based in that stretch of territory lying along the Pak-Afghan border.... The kind of terrorism we encounter today needs to be dealt with in cooperation with our neighbors and indeed other nations affected by it.... A wide-ranging effort is then needed to check the growth in militancy across the Muslim world."

Editorial: Civilian Losses, an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (11/04)

"Given the nature of the war that is being fought in Pakistan, civilians have been falling victim in their hundreds to the violence. Public revulsion and anger are naturally directed at the militants who have been deliberately targeting civilians as their strategy entails brutish strikes in which unarmed men, women and children die.... Their strategy is flawed. Every attack - even though it causes panic and mayhem - can only strengthen the common man's resolve to ward off terrorism. Moreover, it makes the militants and their ideology even more unpopular which means their methods are backfiring as they continue to lose any support they may have had from the people."

Editorial: Suicide Attacks: Uncover The Sponsors, an editorial note an editorial in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (11/04)

"The recent spate of terrorist acts on public places has also revealed that in addition to terrorists, certain other [external] powers are also striving to achieve their condemnable aims. It has come to the fore during Operation Rah-i-Nijat that terrorists use Indian-made weapons to fight the armed forces.... Terrorists will continue resistance until their supply line is disrupted. It is now our government's responsibility to speak at every forum that India is backing the terrorists and is responsible for the present situation."

Editorial: Karzai's 'Victory', an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (11/04)

"Whatever the worth of his victory, Afghanistan's neighbors and the world at large will have to deal once more with President Hamid Karzai.... Pakistan has had serious reservations about Mr. Karzai's policies.... A great deal depends on what policy President Barack Obama finally adopts for the 'Af-Pak' region. Nevertheless, Washington has no choice but to carry the Karzai baggage along, win the 'moderate' Taliban over and take the war to a successful completion. The Obama administration's hesitation over Gen. Stanley McChrystal's request for more troops is adding to the current confusion at a time when Hillary Clinton says the Taliban are gaining momentum. Any hurried retreat will strengthen the forces of extremism and have dangerous consequences for the region."

News Analysis: President, Army row over KLB persists, by Hamid Mir in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (11/04)

"President Asif Ali Zardari has apparently reconciled to the idea that the Kerry-Lugar Bill (KLB) - now an Act after it was signed by U.S. President Obama - may be defeated in parliament, once it is brought back for a vote. It is expected that the government will not oppose any resolution against the KLB in Parliament. President Zardari is mentally ready for accepting another defeat, it is learnt on good authority. If that happens soon, it will be another defeat for the beleaguered President who now has the choice to remain in the Presidency as another Rafiq Tarar or Fazal Ilahi, or quit and go on with his life."

Opinion: Alternative Indigenous Solutions, an op-ed by Shireen M. Mazari in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/04)

"There is a drift in the country, which bodes ill for the nation, because the drift comes at a time when the whole country is in the grip of terrorism. The military is conducting its operations in South Waziristan (SWA), but there is little sign of any civilian infrastructure to move into areas cleared by the military. It is almost as if the civilian leadership has simply left everything to the military in SWA, while it concentrates on futile issues like getting indemnity from corruption through the NRO's legitimization by Parliament.... Meanwhile, it is also becoming abundantly clear to all but the most myopic of people, that the U.S. is bad news for Pakistan. Hillary Clinton could barely wait to get to the U.S., before she unleashed a tirade against Pakistan and its intentions. It seems her need to keep a stiff upper lip in Pakistan created a groundswell of anger and resentment towards this 'ally' and she let it all out in the safe environs of her own country.... Our leaders have already signed away the country's sovereignty across the board by accepting the terms and conditions of the Kerry-Lugar Berman Act and if anyone had doubts about the power the U.S. now exercises over us, read the growing stories about the bumptious display of weapons and arrogance by U.S. diplomats, marines and covert operatives to dispel all doubts...."

Opinion: She Earned The Right To Be Heard, an op-ed by Zafar Hilaly in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (11/04)

"Hillary Clinton gained what few Americans could in Pakistan, a sympathetic hearing. Willing to listen herself she earned the right

to be heard. By being 'forthright and open hearted,' not indulging 'only in happy talk,' and 'at the risk of sounding un-diplomatic,' she impressed her interlocutors. She pushed the right buttons with local audiences and gave the right answers, and deservedly earned credit for her candor and guts.... The aspect of Hillary Clinton's trip that was most disappointing was her inability to articulate anything by way of a U.S. policy in Afghanistan, beyond that is, chasing the elusive Al Qaeda terrorists up and down the foothills of the Hindu Kush. Sorely missing in the mosaic of Obama's plans for Afghanistan is a vision for the future and of that there was not a whiff in Hillary's utterances."

Opinion" Pakistan's Security Scenario, an op-ed by Sajjad Shaukat in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/04)

"In the recent past, the U.S. notorious private security firm, Blackwater has been found to be involved in questionable activities in our country with a new name as Xe Services. The police raided the office of its subsidiary, Inter-Risk, and arrested two employees along with unlicensed weapons. Meanwhile, India is not lagging behind in creating problems for Pakistan. It recently deployed Mig-29 fighter aircraft near our border. The situation is going from bad to worse. Undoubtedly, the Government of Pakistan needs to take very urgent and effective measures for the sovereignty of the nation."

Opinion: Obama's Af-Pak Dilemma, an op-ed by Khalid Aziz in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (11/04)

"At a minimum, the Pakistani military will be forced to launch more operations in FATA and the NWFP as well as new operations in Balochistan. Thus the McChrystal recommendation threatens the security of Pakistan. Mr. Obama must also be looking at the Afghan war from the perspective of his re-election in 2012. If he gets bogged down in an escalating Afghan conflict with rising casualties, he will surely lose. No politician can favor such an unpalatable outcome. Clearly, the pointers are for a reduced U.S. role in Afghanistan in the future and concomitantly a larger policing role for Pakistan."

POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: President's Powers To Be Cut: Gilani "Dawn" (11/04)

"In a move to wrest political initiative after a retreat on the controversial National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) he finally said had been dumped, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani told the National Assembly on Tuesday his government would seek early

restoration of parliament's powers, tackle people's pressing problems and launch an austerity drive." (Story also front paged in all newspapers)

News Story: Senior PPP Leaders' Advice On NRO Ignored "Dawn" (11/04)

"Before President Asif Ali Zardari retreated on the standoff over the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO), some senior leaders of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had suggested to him to drop the bill and face cases against himself. However, President Zardari ignored the advice and decided to table the bill in parliament because he was confident that the NRO would be approved, sources in the PPP said on Tuesday."

Editorial: NRO: A No-Confidence Vote, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/04)

"With the PML-N and Q making it clear they would oppose the NRO in Parliament and outside and the coalition partners of the PPP also backing off, effectively the government suffered a vote of no confidence at least morally and politically, if not legally, within Parliament. Equally significant has been the MQM's new positioning, which will make it difficult for the PPP to assume an automatic majority in Parliament. So it will have to choose between two approaches: One, to continue as in the past, by making deals in order to survive in power with the support of coalition partners. This will leave the ruling party constantly vulnerable to blackmail. Two, the ruling party can actually move to bring about legislation that people have been expecting and count on support based on principles. The Presidency needs to move beyond political wheeling and dealing, and address the very real issues afflicting the nation.... At a time when the country is submerged in crises, it is a cruel joke on the part of the rulers to focus on legitimizing corruption for the political elite."

Editorial: Retreat Over NRO, an editorial in the Lahore-based

liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (11/04)

"The intensity of the PPP-MQM (Pakistan People's Party - Muttahida Qaumi Movement) clash is reflected in the latter's decision to vote against the passage of the NRO. Pakistan will be further destabilized from now on. The PML-N (Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz) will muster the forces intent on overthrowing the government and will move to ask the government to take a confidence vote. Its pious assertions to the contrary, it will push the country towards another general election while the Taliban have passed to the phase of targeting innocent citizens wherever they find them in large gatherings. Taking the PPP government as 'pro-America', they will most likely spare the Long March agitation of the grand opposition, if it comes. Faced with this, the remaining allies will rethink their political strategy and make the paucity of numbers in parliament more glaring for the PPP."

Editorial: A Sinking Presidency, an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (11/04)

"There is no point in pulling punches or glossing over the latest setback to the Zardari presidency. The fiasco over the NRO has weakened the president's political position further and at the moment there is no evidence that Mr. Zardari and his team of advisers have what it takes to recover lost ground, let alone build a successful presidency from the shambles it has been reduced to.... Given the lay of the political land, the only thing that comes to mind that the president could do to improve his position immediately is the very thing he appears deeply reluctant to do: give up his superior powers vis-à-vis the prime minister and parliament."

ECON/BUSINESS

News Story: Remove Reservations On KLA, Nawaz Asks U.S. "The Nation" (11/04)

"The PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday asked the U.S. consulate coordinator for economic development and former vice foreign minister for South Asia Robin Raphel to remove the reservation on Kerry-Lugar Act as soon as possible. He said this while talking to

U.S. dignitary when she called on him along with a delegation at his residence in Raiwind."

MISCELLANEOUS

News Story: 202 Blackwater Personnel Arrive "The Nation" (11/04)

"The foreigners affiliated with the notorious private military contractor Blackwater, whose security company Blackwater was later renamed as Xe Services LLC, arrived in Islamabad on Tuesday through a PIA flight, sources told 'The Nation.' "Of the 274 passengers, who boarded Pakistan's national flag carrier-PIA, flight PK-786 from Heathrow Airport UK, 202 were foreigners but they were fluently speaking Urdu language," disclosed the sources."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson